

# Annual Drinking Water Quality Report For 2008

## The Town of Oxford, Maryland

The Commissioners of Oxford are pleased to present this year's *Annual Drinking Water Report*. This report is designed to inform you about the quality water and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water.

The source of our drinking water is the Aquia Aquifer, which lies approximately 500 feet below the earth's surface. An aquifer is a sort of underground river, which is tapped by drilling wells and pumping the water to the surface for distribution. The earth between surface sources of contamination and this underground river helps to purify the water before it actually reaches the aquifer, making it easier for us to treat before we pump it into your water distribution system.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials & components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Town of Oxford is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking and cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your drinking water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

We are pleased to report that our drinking water is safe and meets federal and state requirements. The maximum level detected for Arsenic during 2004, however, was 12 parts per billion (ppb). In January 2006, a new MCL for Arsenic of 10 parts per billion took effect. To address this, the town has spent the past 2 years performing increased monitoring to characterize fluctuations in the Arsenic levels. Based on the results of this monitoring, the town hired an engineering firm in July 2006 to study options for compliance with the MCL for Arsenic. Upon acceptance of the proposed solution by the town and Maryland Department of Environment (MDE), implementation has started. This includes design and construction of facilities that that will produce drinking water with less than 10 ppb of Arsenic. MDE has indicated their willingness to issue an extension of the compliance deadline, in order to allow towns such as ours ample time to study, design, secure funding, and construct appropriate facilities.

The following report is provided in compliance with federal regulations and will be provided annually. This report outlines the quality of our finished drinking water and what that quality means.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact the Oxford Commissioners Office at 410-226-5122. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled town meetings. They are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, beginning at 7:30 PM, at the Oxford Community Services Building which is located at 101 Market Street in Oxford.

The Town of Oxford's Public Works Department routinely monitors for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The tables on the following pages show the results of our monitoring.

In this report, you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

### Definitions

*Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)* - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years, a single penny in \$10,000, or 1 inch in 16 miles.

*Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter (ug/l)* - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, a single penny in \$10,000,000, or 1 inch in 16,000 miles

*Action Level* - the concentration of a contaminant, which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

*Maximum Contaminant Level* - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

*Maximum Contaminant Level Goal* - The "Goal" (MCLG) is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.



**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)** – The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants. Note: The State of Maryland requires that community water systems apply a disinfectant and maintain a disinfectant residual throughout the distribution system. The Town of Oxford utilizes chlorine for this purpose.

TEST RESULTS						
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>						
Beta/photon emitters			pCi/l	0	50	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Well 1 (2008)	N	7				
Well 2 (2008)	N	5				
Alpha emitters			pCi/l	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits
Well 1 (2008)	N	1				
Well 2 (2008)	N	1				
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>						
Arsenic			ppb	n/a	.010	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Well 1 (average)	Y	.014				
Well 2 (average)	Y	.015				
Copper (Distribution)	N	0.178	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Fluoride			ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Well 1	N	1.55				
Well 2	N	1.54				
Lead (Distribution)	N	0	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits
Antimony Well 2	N	2	ppb	6	6	Discharge from petroleum refineries; fire retardants; ceramics; electronics; solder
<b>Synthetic Organic Contaminants including Pesticides and Herbicides</b>						
Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate	N	0.5	ppb	0	6	Discharge from rubber and chemical factories
<b>Volatile Organic Contaminants</b>						
TTHM (Distribution) [Total trihalomethanes]	N	3.6	ppb	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
<b>Regulated Contaminants</b>						
Chloroform (well 2) (2004)	N	2.3	ppb	N/A	N/A	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Bromoform (well 2) (2004)	N	0.7	ppb	N/A	N/A	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Bromodichloromethane (well 2) (2004)	N	2.3	ppb	N/A	N/A	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Dibromochloromethane (well 2) (2004)	N	2.5	ppb	N/A	N/A	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Disinfectant Residual (range)		0.1 – 2.7	ppm		4.0 (MRDL)	
pH (range)		7.9 – 8.7	Standard units		N/A	

Note: Test results are for CY 2008 unless otherwise noted. All contaminants are not required to be tested for annually.

**Health Effects Statement for Arsenic Levels Exceeding 10 ppb:** Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. **More information about contaminants and**

potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or visiting the EPA Drinking Water Website @ [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater). Information related to drinking water can also be obtained at the Maryland Department of Environment website at [www.mde.state.md.us](http://www.mde.state.md.us)

The presence of some contaminants in drinking water is unavoidable, but we make every effort to keep our water at or below the levels specified by law as being safe for consumption. Our Public Works Department staff consists of six full time employees. Five who are state certified water system operators and have a combined experience of more than 30 years. Each year our staff attends required state approved continuing education in an effort to keep up-to-date with the latest techniques in water treatment and distribution. Our mission is to provide you with a continuous supply of the best possible quality water. In order to do this, we maintain a professional and qualified staff.

In our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Rate adjustments may be necessary in order to address these improvements. We must set our water rates so that the system pays for itself without subsidy from property tax revenues.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk of infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing you and your family with safe, quality water this year. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us.

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Note: Copies of previous year's reports are still available. To request a copy, call 410-226-5122.

Commissioners of Oxford

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